

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the specification on page 13, paragraph 1 to recite:

The present invention utilizes a sense RNA fragment and an antisense RNA fragment of a target gene to alter the expression of the gene in a cell. In a first embodiment, the invention provides method comprising introducing into a cell a sense RNA fragment of a target gene and an antisense RNA fragment of said target gene, wherein said sense RNA fragment and said antisense RNA fragment are capable of forming a double-stranded RNA molecule, wherein the expression of said target gene in said cell is altered. The RNA fragments are introduced in the cells by different transformation methods. For example, the RNA fragments are transferred to the host cells using particle bombardment as described in co-pending application 08/717,676, issued on April 18, 2000 as US Patent No. 6,051,409. In another preferred embodiment, the RNA fragments are introduced into the protoplasts or other types of cells by PEG-mediated transformation as described in Lebel et al. (1995) Theor. Appl. Genet. 91: 899-906 or by electroporation. In another preferred embodiment, other techniques, such as microinjection of the RNA fragments, are used.

Please amend the specification on page 18, first paragraph to recite:

controlled are plant viruses, for example topoviruses, potyviruses, potexviruses, tobamoviruses, luteoviruses, cucumoviruses, bromoviruses, closteroviruses, tombusviruses and furoviruses. Additional classes of viruses which are controllable using the present invention are described in Zacommer et al. (1995) Journal of General Virology, 76: 231-247 and in Martelli (1992) Plant Disease, 76: 436-441, both of which are incorporated herein in their entirety. Preferred DNA sequences of the present invention comprise the viral genome or any portion of the viral genome. Preferred are e.g. viral coat proteins or portions thereof, viral nucleocapsid proteins or portions thereof, viral replicases or portions thereof, movement proteins or portions thereof and the like. Additional DNA sequences are described in co-pending US application serial number 08/624,581 issued on May 25, 1999 as US Patent No. 5,907,084, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. Other preferred DNA sequences include portions of the viral genome not translated into proteins, e.g. 5' or 3' untranslated regions.